

## **Fact Sheet About the Hurricane Relief Leave Program for California State Employees**

The State of California encourages its employees to assist in the ongoing relief and recovery efforts for areas hard hit by the recent hurricanes. To help make it possible for you to volunteer, we're launching the Hurricane Relief Leave Program, described below.

### **Who's eligible to take this leave?**

Up to 5,000 permanent full-time California State employees who have passed their probation period and who have sufficient unused leave time may participate in this program. Participation is voluntary.

### **How much leave time can I take?**

If you meet the qualifying criteria, and your department grants your request, the State will give you 40 hours of Administrative Time Off (ATO) for this program. ATO is a form of paid leave. In addition, if you use your own vacation time, annual leave, or "compensating time off" (CTO), the State will match it on a one-to-one basis with up to 50 additional hours of ATO, for a total of 140 hours away from work to participate in the hurricane relief and recovery efforts.

Relief organizations like the American Red Cross typically require volunteers to commit to a minimum time period, generally three weeks plus one day for training (128 hours).

You may take additional time off to help with hurricane relief if your department grants your request to be away longer. However, the amount of that time that qualifies for ATO is subject to the limits described above.

### **Can I do any kind of relief work under this leave program?**

To qualify for the ATO, your time off must be related to hurricane relief and be sponsored by a certified relief or service agency, as determined by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES).

Currently, the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and the Medical Reserve Corps meet this requirement. As OES approves additional charitable relief organizations for this purpose, it will post their names on the [OES Web site](#).

### **Do I need to provide documentation?**

Yes. Your State employer will require documentation that you spent your leave time under this program doing hurricane relief work sponsored by a relief or

service agency that's been certified by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Please check with your Personnel Office regarding its requirements for this documentation.

**Do I need to apply or get approval to take this leave?**

Yes. You must follow your department's normal procedures for requesting time off and getting approval. Only employees who receive approval from their department may participate in this leave program.

**Is my employer required to grant me this time off?**

As much as we'd like to be able to grant everyone's request to participate in this leave program, we also have an obligation to the people of California to maintain normal State services. Your agency or department's management will take these operational needs into account when deciding whether to grant your request.

**If I already took time off for Katrina relief work, can I still qualify for this program?**

With your department's approval, you may use the leave time granted by this program for time you have already spent on hurricane relief work. You will still be subject to the conditions and requirements described above.

**Does Administrative Time Off count toward overtime?**

No. Although ATO is paid leave, it does not count as time worked for overtime purposes.

**Do my State benefits continue while I'm on this leave?**

Yes. All your normal State benefits will continue to be covered. There is no break in service or loss of seniority resulting from participation in this leave program.

**Where can I find out more about volunteer opportunities for Katrina relief?**

The California Service Corps and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services are coordinating with various relief agencies seeking volunteers. Visit their Web sites for links to these organizations and descriptions of what you can do to help.

CSC Web site: [www.csc.ca.gov](http://www.csc.ca.gov)

OES Web site: [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov)